

## Auspicious month of Kartik Niyam Seva begins in Vraja

Forty day long, Kartik Niyam Seva begins from Shukla Ekadashi, 24th October in Vrindavan. Some devotees begin the month long vow from Sharad Purnima, which lasts till Kartik (Raas) Purnima. People from around the world started to visit Vrindavan in this holy month of Kartik Niyam Seva. The hotels and guest houses are already full.

The temples of Sapta Devalayas have started attracting the devotees from morning 3 a.m. They attend the mangala arati in Shri Radha Shyam Sundar Mandir at 3.30 a.m. followed by Radha Damodar at 4.00 a.m., Radha Govind Dev and Radha Raman at 4.30 a.m., Radha Gopinath and Gokulananda at 5.00 a.m. and Radha Madan Mohan at 5.30 a.m. They sing and dance glorifying the Lord's name. Groups of devotees belonging from various ashrams and temple participate in the Nagar Sankirtans which pass through the markets and small lanes of Shri Dham Vrindavan.

Devotees offer lamps to the deities in the morning and in the evening during the aratis. They perform four rounds of Parikrama of the Damodar Mandir, resembling one full parikrama of Shri Govardhan hill. Many devotees take the vow of daily parikrama of Shri Dham Vrindavan.

Gaudiyas especially observe Kartik Vrata for the purpose of worshipping and pleasing the Divine Couple. They sing the songs of the various pastimes of the Lordships and full heartedly glorify Lord Damodara of Gokula throughout this month and devotedly worship the mischievous and beautiful form of Lord Krishna.

The devotees follow all the strict rules and regulations related to their bhajans and adopt satvik lifestyles for the forty day long Niyam Seva. Many take the vow of early bath in the morning, cooking the food with their own hands, walking barefooted in Vrindavan and Vraja, increased number of japa rounds, reading the books which describes about the pastimes of the Divine Couple of Radha Shyam Sundar etc.



## In the News

### Guest lined up for Prakash Mahotsava includes President Governor and CM

Many celebrations are on track to mark the 500th anniversary of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's coming to Vrindavan in the month of November.

Most of the celebrations will take place in the last week of Kartik, i.e., the 17th to 25th of November, which concludes with Kartik Purnima, the actual day Mahaprabhu set foot in Vrindavan. The main event will be held in the Chaitanya Mahaprabhu temple.

The President of India Pranab Mukherjee, Governor Ram Naik, Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav and local MP Hema Malini, have all been invited to one or more of the programs and are expected to participate.



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# Krishna Bhumi NEWSLETTER

October 2015

Volume 9 | Diwali Edition

## Krishna theme park in Mathura soon

Bollywood star and BJP MP Hema Malini will develop a Krishna theme park in Mathura and UP Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav has pledged that he will allot 50 acres of land. Hema Malini, who met Akhilesh here on Saturday to discuss the project, told TOI the park will be called the Krishna Leela Udyan.

"It will have an investment of Rs. 200 crore and technical know-how will be provided by the makers of Disneyland. The Chief Minister has been supportive and has promised to provide land," she said.

The theme park will present the life and times of Lord Krishna. She presented a detailed project report to the Chief Minister, who along with state Chief Secretary Alok Ranjan, discussed the project. The park will also have rides, including mini trains, food courts and bazars.

She remarked, "Millions of people are coming to Braj already, but we want to make it more attractive for pilgrims and tourists. At the midday, the temples close and people have nothing to do or anywhere to go for amusement. So this will fill that need."

Moreover, an important part of the project includes an outdoor amphitheatre for cultural programmes, bringing this presentation of the age old Braj culture to

international audience. This would be modeled on the Mukta Kashiya Rangamanch in Mathura.

Apart from the Krishna theme park, Hema Malini spoke of plans for developing Rawal village, which she has adopted for special consideration. The village lies on the Mathura-Sadabad Road in the general area of Gokul in her constituency Mathura and is said to be Radharani's birthplace.

A special garden called Radha Bagicha will be developed at the place Radha is believed to have appeared on a lotus."The park and the garden will draw attention of the nation and people around the world and help spread the message of Krishna," she said.



### DHANTERAS

The festival of Dhanteras falls in the month of Kartik (Oct-Nov) on the thirteenth day of the dark fortnight. This auspicious day is celebrated two days before the festival of lights, Diwali. The word Dhanteras comes from the Sanskrit word Dhan which means wealth and Teras which means thirteen.

Dhanteras indicates the beginning of Diwali celebrations. It is on this day on which people purchase precious metals with a belief that they will bring prosperity. Dhanteras is also known as Dhantryadashi or Dhanwantri Triodasi.

Dhanteras is mainly celebrated to get the blessings of Goddess Lakshmi. Everyone tries to make Goddess Lakshmi happy and for the same reason they also perform 'Lakshmi Pooja'. The Hindu community celebrates Dhanteras festival very religiously.

### Owner speak:

Mrs. Madhubala Agarwal  
Ward Member  
Agra Resident

"Our entire family is looking forward to spending quality time at Krishna Bhumi".





## Gardens and nurseries of *Tulsi* will be developed in Vrindavan

If things go well, there shall not be any scarcity of Tulsi leaves in Vrindavan from the next year. Friends of Vrindavan (FoV) is planning to set up Tulsi gardens and nurseries in several places of Vrindavan and its nearby villages. During winter the temples of Vraja - Vrindavan face shortage of Tulsi leaves as most of the plants die due to the severe cold.

The idea of developing Tulsi gardens was floated by the Saints and Acharyas at Radha Shyam Sundar Mandir, where FoV distributed more than two hundred Tulsi saplings to the devotees who came for darshan in the temple. Shri Anurag Goyal, an industrialist who was the Chief Guest of the 'Tulsi distribution programme' promised financial assistance for this ambitious project.

Mahant Shri Krishna Gopalananda Dev Goswami, the sevait of Thakur Radha Shyam Sundar Mandir stressed the need of establishing the Tulsi gardens in every temple of Vrindavan. He said, "Vrindavan Temples must have Tulsi gardens in their campus. Tulsi and Vrindavan can't be separated from each other. Shri Krishna

doesn't accept bhog without Tulsi. The Lord is worshipped with Tulsi leaves. Therefore Vrindavan temples should develop their own gardens of Tulsi to facilitate the seva in their respective temples."

Shri Girdhari Brajwasi and Shri Tamal Krishna Das suggested that no house of Vrindavan should be left without Tulsi. "We shall grow the saplings and distribute them from the different temples, so that Vrinda Devi reaches every house of the town, and Krishna Bhakti grows in the heart of the

devotees," said Shri Tamal Krishna Das. Pt. Bihari Lal Bashishtha of Brahman Maha Sabha said that Vrindavan was represented by the groves of Tulsi and its other typical plants of Vraja.

It is believed that the tradition of Sanjhi began during the times of Shri Krishna. Radha Rani along with her friends would draw the sanjhi with flowers on the way of Krishna at dusk, when he returned with the cowherd. Since then Sanjhi was made at the time of dusk (sanjhi in Vraja language means dusk), it was known as Sanjhi.



## CLICK OF THE MONTH



A group of 200 devotees that left Jagannath Puri, Orissa, on foot on 5th August arrived in Mathura on 22nd Oct, and were given a grand welcome in various places in the city.

## Diwali: Festival of Lights 🕯️🕯️🕯️

Deepawali or Diwali is certainly the biggest and the brightest of all Hindu festivals. It's the festival of lights which literally illumines the country with its brilliance and dazzles all with its joy. Each of the four days in the festival of Diwali is separated by a different tradition, but what remains true and constant is the celebration of life, its enjoyment and goodness.

Historically, the origin of Diwali can be traced back to ancient India, when it was probably an important harvest festival. However, there are various legends pointing to the origin of Diwali or 'Deepawali.' Some believe it to be the celebration of the marriage of Lakshmi with Lord Vishnu. Whereas in Bengal the festival is dedicated to the worship of Mother Kali, the dark goddess of strength. Lord Ganesha, the elephant-headed God, the symbol of auspiciousness and wisdom, is also worshiped in most Hindu homes on this day. In Jainism, Deepawali has an added significance to the great event of Lord Mahavira attaining the eternal bliss of nirvana.

Diwali also commemorates the return of Lord Rama along with Sita and Lakshman from his fourteen year long exile and vanquishing the demon-king Ravana. In joyous celebration of the return of their king, the people of Ayodhya, illuminated the kingdom with earthen diyas (oil lamps) and burst crackers.

**These Four Days** - Each day of Diwali has its own tale, legend and myth to tell. The first day of the festival Naraka Chaturdasi marks the vanquishing of the

demon Naraka by Lord Krishna and his wife Satyabhama, marks the worship of Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth in her most benevolent mood, fulfilling the wishes of her devotees. Amavasya also tells the story of Lord Vishnu, who in his dwarf incarnation vanquished the tyrant Bali, and banished him to hell. Bali was allowed to return to earth once a year, to light millions of lamps to dispel the darkness and ignorance, and spread the radiance of love and wisdom. It is on the third day of Deepawali - Kartika Shudda Padyami that Bali steps out of hell and rules the earth according to the boon given by Lord Vishnu. The fourth day is referred to as Yama Dvitiya (also called Bhai Dooj) and on this day sisters invite their brothers to their homes.

**The Significance of Lights & Firecrackers** - All the simple rituals of Diwali have a significance and a story to tell. The illumination of homes with lights and the skies with firecrackers is an expression of obeisance to the heavens for the attainment of health, wealth, knowledge, peace and prosperity.

**The Tradition of Gambling** - The tradition of gambling on Diwali also has a legend behind it. It is believed that on this day, Goddess Parvati played dice with her husband Lord Shiva, and she decreed that whosoever gambled on Diwali night would prosper throughout the ensuing year. Diwali is associated with wealth and prosperity in many ways, and the festival of 'Dhanteras' ('dhan' = wealth; 'teras' = 13th) is celebrated two days before the festival of lights.

## Recipe of KAJU KATLI



**INGREDIENTS** (measuring cup Whole)  
Cashews - 1 cup  
Sugar - 1/2 cup  
Water - 1/4 cup  
Melted Ghee - just for greasing

**INSTRUCTIONS**  
Measure your ingredients and keep it ready. If your are cashews are refrigerated, then bring to room temperature and then proceed. Ensure your mixer is completely dry. Transfer cashews to a mixer and grind it to a semi fine powder. Don't overdo as the cashews will leave out oil and the whole mixture will turn sticky.

Now boil sugar and water, keep stirring in low flame till sugar completely dissolves. Then it starts to bubble up, Keep stirring, keep a small bowl containing water. Check by pouring few drops of sugar syrup in water, it should a fine thread and should not dissolve. That's the right stage.

Now add the cashew mixture and keep stirring until it forms a thick rolling mixture like this. It should be like a flexible dough. The dough should not be dry, it should be soft and flexible so switch off accordingly. You can even try rolling a ball, it should be flexible then that's the correct consistency. It took me just 7-8 mins for forming the cashew dough. Switch off and let it cool down for 10mins.

When its still warm, knead it well, don't scrap the dough from the sides as the mixture would be hard. The dough was grainy, but after kneading the dough became smooth. If you feel the mixture is dry add 1/2 tsp ghee and then knead it. Now lay a butter paper, place the kaju dough and fold the paper such that the butter paper is on top and bottom of the dough. Now start rolling with a chapathi roller.

Roll it to 1/4 inch thickness, remove the butter paper on top. Cut with a sharp knife. Mark lines and cut into diamonds.

Serve the Kaju Katli straight away or keep in an air tight container.

## From the Bhagwad Gita



यस्त्वात्मरतिरेव स्यादात्मतृप्तश्च मानवः।  
आत्मन्येव च सन्तुष्टस्तस्य कार्यं न विद्यते॥१७॥

"Nonetheless, there is no duty for that human being who rejoices only in Self, is satisfied with Self, and feels quite contented in Self alone"

*Bhagavadgītā (Bhagavad Gita): Chapter III (Karmayoga) Stanza 17*

## Watch out!

- 7th November : Rama Ekadashi
- 8th November : Indira Ekadashi
- 9th November : Dhanteras
- 11th November : Diwali, Lakshmi Puja
- 12th November : Gowardhan Puja
- 13th November : Bhaiya Dooj
- 17th November : Chhath Puja
- 25th November : Kartik Purnima